

which was later identified for me by Mr. Frank M. Chapman, to whom I sent it, as *Melospiza lincolni*.

This, I believe, is the first known instance of the occurrence of the species in New Brunswick. — WILLIE H. MOORE, *Scotch Lake, N. B.*

Rank of the Sage Sparrow. — On page 58 of the current volume of 'The Auk,' Mr. Joseph Grinnell states that he found *Amphispiza belli* and *Amphispiza belli nevadensis* inhabiting the same locality at the head of the Little Tujunga Cañon, Los Angeles County, California, in July, 1897. This area is on the western slope of the divide, though not more than ten miles from the Mohave Desert. Mr. Grinnell further states that he has never learned of any intermediate specimens between the two forms, and consequently argues that they are specifically distinct.

On the Death Valley Expedition in 1891, Mr. Frank Stephens collected a number of specimens on the eastern slope of the Sierras, opposite the south end of Owens Lake, which I reported as being intermediate in color and size (N. Am. Fauna, No. 7, p. 98).

Taking this into consideration and the fact that *Amphispiza b. nevadensis* had evidently wandered from their desert home, as Mr. Grinnell writes me they were fully fledged, I cannot agree with him that there is any reason for considering the two forms more than subspecifically distinct. — A. K. FISHER, *Washington, D. C.*

Wintering of the Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*) at Rockaway Beach, L. I. — On the 29th of January, 1898, I made a collecting trip to Rockaway Beach in the hope of seeing some winter birds, as the weather had been very cold for several days, and on the day in question the air was full of flying snow. While passing through a small thicket of brambles I felt sure I heard the Towhee's note, and started in to investigate. Although he was exceedingly wild, I at length caught a glimpse of him, and by remaining quiet for some time eventually secured him. Later in the day, I found three more, all males, as was the one I shot. It is quite evident that this bird occasionally winters much further north than is generally supposed, as there are also records from Longwood, Mass., on Christmas, and Bedford, Mass., on Jan. 2 (Auk, July, 1896).

Mr. L. S. Foster informs me that he secured a specimen on Feb. 22, near Oradell, N. J. — HARRY WEBB FLOYD, *New York City.*

The Rose-breasted Grosbeak in California. — During a collecting trip last summer in northern California, Dr. C. H. Gilbert and a party of students secured some birds that were new to the fauna of the State. While at Meyer's, Humboldt Co., Cal., July 1, 1897, the attention of the party was attracted by a string of strange birds that had been shot some-time before and were already in the early stages of decomposition. Not being able to decide what the birds were, several heads were cut off,

brought back, and are now in the collection of the University. The heads are male and female of the well-known eastern species, *Zamelodia ludoviciana*. How they came here is unknown. The farmer upon whose place the specimens were found declared they were quite common about his orchard in spring and did considerable damage to cherries and other fruit. He has promised to send specimens to Dr. Gilbert this spring.—
ROBERT B. McLAIN, *Stanford University, Cal.*

The Philadelphia Vireo (*Vireo philadelphicus*).—I read with much interest the article on the Philadelphia Vireo by Dr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr., published recently in 'The Auk' (Vol. XIV, No. 3). It may interest many who have perused that article to know that I met with a pair of these birds and secured their nest within a short distance of Lansdowne Station, Ontario. This happened in June, 1895. I had never met with the species before, but knew of it as being an occasional summer visitant to the vicinity of Ottawa, Ont. The place where I met with the birds was a rough pasture with here and there a clump of young poplar trees on the drier ground, elsewhere there were wet boggy places of small extent grown up with alders, an occasional tamarack, and a great deal of the well known plant, *Spiræa salisifolia*; some of this latter growing to the unusual height of four or even five feet. It was in a spray of the latter that I discovered the nest on the 14th of June, 1895. In it were two Cowbird's eggs, and one of the Vireo's. I removed the Vireo's egg and one of the Cowbird's, which had the effect of causing the birds to desert, for I visited the place a few days later and saw nothing of them.

With regard to the nest (which I gave to Professor Jno. McCoun of Ottawa), it was scarcely so finished a structure as is the Red-eyed Vireo's. The outside was a little ragged, a few stalks of dried grass protruding. Though pensile, it was not so carefully finished off; the straggling nature of the shrub perhaps preventing this. A quantity of spider's webs, etc., completed the structure.

With regard to the egg, it was marked exactly like that of the Red-eye, Vireo but was smaller, and according to its size was rather more globular in shape.

My observation of the birds and their location agreed very nearly with Dr. Dwight's experience, and had he searched and watched the place persistently where on the 10th July, 1893, he noticed what he took to be a female scolding and ruffling her feathers, he would probably have found the nest. I was attracted to the nest I found by the anxiety of the birds; they scolded and were quite tame. I have not noticed the Red-eye act thus. They hopped from branch to branch of the neighboring alders incessantly; there were no high trees near by. I observed them through strong field glasses, and in describing the birds should say that